

via pacis

—The voice of the Des Moines Catholic Worker Community

July, 2008

www.desmoinescatholicworker.org

Volume 32, No. 2



Colyn Burbank and Taylor Hays clean bricks blown from the Berrigan House basement foundation by flooding, while Matt Matzke mortars them back into place.

A Flood of Grit and Kindness

by Mona Shaw

*When peace, like a river,
attendeth my way,*

*When sorrows like sea
billows roll;*

*Whatever my lot, Thou
has taught me to say,*

*It is well, it is well, with
my soul.*

It was two harsh tragedies that inspired Horatio Gates Spafford to write these lyrics. The first was his financial ruin caused by the Chicago Fire in 1871. The second was losing four daughters in a ship wreck. Crossing the Atlantic months later, near the spot where his children had died, Stafford felt a sense of being comforted that he could only attribute to what he called the "holy spirit."

This past quarter our hospitality mission has faced its own "sea billows" (aka the Flood of 2008).

While our houses at the DMCW sit on high ground on the north side of Des Moines and blocks

away from the area under water, the flood has still affected us dramatically and caused major damage to our houses and foundations. Given the unprecedented deluge of rain that's fallen, there likely isn't a home in our area left with a dry basement, and ours are no exception. Moreover, since the deteriorating condition of our basements and house foundations have been an issue for some time now, this past month's pounding of water has moved the matter from "addressing this some day" to one requiring immediate and urgent attention.

At Berrigan House: The north side basement brick wall has hemorrhaged under the water pressure and crumbled apart. We've taken emergency steps to keep the house from collapsing, including clearing away bricks and debris, installing additional load bearing jacks, and extending the down spouts.

At Dingman House: Water has forced several new cracks and widened old ones in the foundation on all sides. A combination of water and dirt that has gushed in has made for a slick covering of mud in the areas where most of our food and clothing was stored. We have had to discard almost all of the clothing, as well as a heart-wrenching amount of stored food items, (especially food in boxes) at a time when our food supplies were already disturbingly low. Almost all of the shelving has been destroyed and will need to be replaced. The repair and clean up before us here is daunting.

At Ligutti House: There are two to four inches of standing water throughout the entire basement. Most of what has been stored there—lumber and repair supplies-- will need to be hauled away adding a great burden to our waste disposal budget. We have yet to do anything at Ligutti House because the more dangerous emer-

gencies at the Berrigan and Dingman houses have not allowed us the time nor the resources. Still, we know the hazards of continuing to neglect Ligutti to remain as it is much longer are dangerous and serious.

Our plan of action for now is to rebuild the north wall of the Berrigan House basement, clean out the entire basement of Dingman House, do some critical brick and foundation work, and build new shelving. When this is done, we will tackle the problems at Ligutti House.

Natural disasters are most devastating for the poor, of course. And many of our guests are profoundly suffering. Several who are homeless lost everything (gear, tents, blankets and clothes) to the river. Relocation and recovering these things is far harder for them. Clinical depression and thoughts of suicide spike at times like these. We hold hands when we can do nothing else.

Storms bring more storms; stress brings more stress; and heartache is amplified. An especially lovely guest named Antoinette passed away this month to add to her family's grief and struggle. Her daughter's face still haunts us from the day she came to us for advice about taking her mother off life support. We held and rocked in our arms a young mother who lost custody of her child as she also lost her home. We found prescription money for a young man who's bumped from Medicaid without warning. And more. And more. And more.

Every day these friends we love must face those tragedies, such as losing a loved one or learning oneself has a terminal illness, that are not uncommon for all in life. However, they face these blows without access to healthcare, food,

or housing in a society that mostly shuns them, if they acknowledge they exist at all. We do all we can. It isn't enough.

Following their personal tragedies, Spafford and his wife, Anna, developed a habit of acting on faith. In 1881 they led a small American contingent to Jerusalem to form a Christian community known as the "American Colony." Colony members, later joined by Swedish Christians, engaged in philanthropic work amongst the people of Jerusalem regardless of their religious affiliation and without proselytizing motives--thereby gaining the trust of the local Muslim, Jewish, and Christian communities. During and immediately after World War I, the American Colony played a critical role in supporting these communities through the great suffering and deprivations of the eastern front by running soup kitchens, hospitals, orphanages and other charitable ventures.

We follow a similar tradition at the Des Moines Catholic Worker. From various religions and faiths and some claiming no religious faith at all, and regardless of the tragedies we witness; we persist in believing in our collective ability to be good by doing a little good in the middle of hardship. We find we are never doing this alone. And it is this sweet and predictable evidence of human kindness and its dependable comfort that at our core leaves us well with our soul.

And, yes, of course, we need your help. The damages from the flood to our houses and replacing what we've lost are extensive and threaten our ability to continue helping our neighbor. We still don't know a specific figure, but that it will be several thousand. Any help you can spare will be received with the gratitude of many, many hearts.

via pacis

c/o Des Moines Catholic Worker
PO Box 4551
Des Moines, IA 50305
www.DesMoinesCatholicWorker.org

Editor

Frank Cordaro
frank.cordaro@gmail.com
515-282-4781

Assistant Editor and Designer

Mona Shaw
monashaw@aol.com
515-282-4781

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The Des Moines Catholic Worker Community

The Des Moines Catholic Worker Community, founded in 1976, is a response to the Gospel call to compassionate action as summarized by the Catholic Worker tradition. We are committed to a simple, nonviolent lifestyle as we live and work among the poor. We directly serve others by opening the Dingman House as a daytime drop-in center for those in need of food, clothing, toiletries, use of a phone, toilet, a shower or just a cup of coffee and conversation. We also engage in activities that forward social justice.

Mailing address:
PO Box 4551
Des Moines IA 50305

Bishop Dingman House (Hospitality)

1310 7th St.
Des Moines, IA 50314
515-243-0765
Worker Residents: Kirk Brown, Mohamed Elkhandaoui, Halsey Reynolds, and Jacob Olsen

Phillip Berrigan House (Social Justice)

713 Indiana Ave.
Des Moines, IA 50314
515-282-4781
Worker Residents: Frank Cordaro and Mona Shaw

Msgr. Ligutti House (Worker Residence)

1301 8th St.
Des Moines, IA 50314
515-280-1216
Residents: Ed Bloomer, Norman Searah, and Mike Fuller

Lazarus House (Guest Residence)

1317 8th St.
Des Moines, IA 50314
Guest Residents: Carla Dawson, Josh Dawson, Jordan Dawson, Irving Schroeder

Weekly Lectionary Bible Study

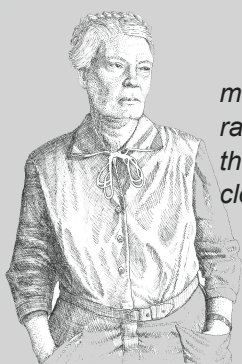
Mondays, 7pm. Berrigan House
Call to confirm.

Weekly Mass or Prayer Service

Fridays, 7:30pm, Dingman House
All are welcome!

The Chiapas Project

Chiapas, Mexico
Richard Flamer
flamerrichard@hotmail.com



As for ourselves, we must be meek, bear injustice, malice, and rash judgment. We must turn the other cheek, give up our cloak, go a second mile.

-Dorothy Day

Euro Catholic Worker Gathering in Germany



by Bernd Büscher, Dortmund
Germany Catholic Worker

About 40 people came to the European Catholic Worker Gathering at the "House at the Lake" in Dülmen/Germany this year to celebrate the 75th anniversary of our movement. It was great to spend the days together and to listen to Jim Forest, who had been editor of "The Catholic Worker" in New York in the Sixties and had known Dorothy personally. Jim, who was

General Secretary of the International Fellowship of Reconciliation for many years still lives as an author in Alkmaar/Netherlands (where IFOR's international office is situated). His books include biographies of Dorothy Day and Thomas Merton. His talk and his "just being with the family" moved us all.

Eight CW communities from Britain (Oxford, London), the Netherlands (three from Amsterdam)

and Germany (Hamburg, Dargelütz, Dortmund) were represented. We were also blessed by the presence of friends from "sister communities" as Emmaus Utrecht and the Wulfshagenerhütten Base Community.

Besides listening to talks we had a great time with campfires, boating on and swimming in the lake, playing football (that's what we call soccer over here), singing, chatting, and of course with the Cabaret. It all finished with a beautiful closing worship on the lake on Sunday morning.

This year, there was nobody from the US present (except Jim Forest). We would love to have you in 2009! If you're interested in coming, please contact Bernd Büscher, Kreuzstr. 134, 44137 Dortmund, Germany, Bernd-Buescher@web.de. The date is not yet fixed, but we'll let you know as soon as possible.



Vigil for Return of Deployed Iowa Guard

by Frank Cordaro

Pilots from the Iowa Air National Guard's 132nd Fighter Wing flew their F-16 fighter jets back to Des Moines, Iowa, as they returned from federal active duty in Iraq on Tuesday, June 17, 2008, to the Air National Guard Base at the Des Moines airport. These twelve pilots and jets were deployed from the 132nd Fighter Wing in missions in support of ground forces primarily in Iraq. The main body of the deployment, composed of about 230 Airmen, returned to Des Moines later in the week.

The good news is that the pilots of the Iowa Air National Guard's twelve F-16 Fighter Jets and the deployed Airmen have returned to Iowa safe and sound. The sad news is there is no telling how many Iraqis were killed or wounded or what level of destruction, pain and suffering these F-16s inflicted on the people in Iraq as they fulfilled their mission. Such statistics and facts were not released. Nor are these statistics and

facts of any interest to the Des Moines Register or other commercial news media outlets. And, the bad news is that the US-led war and occupation in Iraq continues with no end in sight.

Because of all of the above, for ten weeks members of the Des Moines Catholic Workers Community, our friends, and other peace makers have maintained a weekly vigil at the main entrance of the Iowa Air Guard fa-

cility, home of the 132nd Fighter Wing. (See June 11 photo above.)

Our vigils were small (from four to a dozen in attendance), just a lit match in a very dark night. Yet even a lit match in the darkness of night is better than no light at all.

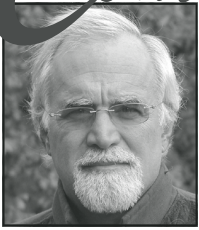
Wednesday, June 18, was our last weekly vigil at this IA Guard facility. Should these F-16s leave the state again on another deadly mission, we will undoubtedly return.

Visit our web site!

There is a wealth of information on our web site including recent news, photos, videos, educational materials, activities, and upcoming actions and events. Check it often.



Community News



By
Frank
Cordaro

So far this summer has been non-stop, with plenty to do and lots of surprises. We are just wrapping up our first two-week Summer Internship. It was a great experience for all, especially for us DMCW-ers. All of the extra hands came in handy when it came time to clean up our three basements from months of constant rain. We were lucky we were not in a flood plain; so many lowans who were are flooded out. The state is in a real mess. As we send this issue of *via pacis* to our printer to be mailed, we are preparing to head out to Worcester, Massachusetts, for the 75th Anniversary Celebration of the Catholic Worker movement. We will be closing the Dingman House for hospitality from July 7 to 17 while we are at the gathering.

In the midst of all the activity, the leaving of Jackie Robinson from our community did not go unnoticed. Jackie's been with us close to ten years. She wants to spend more time with her new grandson and take better care of her health. She and James promise to stay in close contact and will be doing a shift or two on a regular basis. We miss you a bunch Jackie. Drop by often.

That leaves Norman Searah, Mike Fuller and Ed Bloomer at Ligutti House. Norman keeps

busy these days trying to keep order in the "office," the term we use to describe the resource room on the first floor of Dingman House. This is no small task given all the donations we receive. The flooded basement at Dingman House has not helped much in this regard since lots of stuff recovered from the basement is now being stored in the "office." When Norman is not on duty, he is writing. He's been writing a lot of short stories lately and is in need of someone to edit and type them into an electronic form so they can be uploaded onto the internet. Any takers?

Mike Fuller is busy with his work, taking his share of shifts at Dingman House, maintaining our Peace and Justice Library at Berrigan House, and watching his granddaughter Jessica once a week. Jessica has been coming to the DMCW many years now. She is a familiar sight at the Berrigan House computer table. Mike is recovering from an infected finger cut that landed him in the hospital for three days. He is on the mend.

Eddy recently returned from Washington, D.C. after being put on trial for the anti GITMO / torture demo last January 11th at the Supreme Court. He and 33 others were found guilty of trespass. Eddy was one of four lowans on trial in DC along with Brian Terrell of the Maloy CW, Christine Gaunt and our own Kirk Brown. Eddy was sentenced to one day in jail. Eddy is bouncing back from a virus that laid

him out for 10 days. He, too, is on the mend.

Dingman House is the home of Kirk Brown, Mohammad Elkhanda-gawi, Jacob Olson and our newest DMCW Halsey Reynolds. Kirk's been busy with resistance work. Along with Eddy, he stood trial in Wash DC to the anti GITMO / torture protest at the Supreme Court. He was found guilty and sentenced to 10 days in jail. A great first time experience of doing time for our young resister. When he returned to DM he joined Mona and me facilitating the two-week internship. He was back in a court room to stand trial in Polk County for his trespass charge from a March 19 occupation of a military recruitment office in DM on the fifth Anniversary of the Iraq War on Monday June 23rd. Luckily, the charges were dropped. Kirk has taken on the issue of torture and is doing a lot of local organizing surrounding it. He is doing us proud.

Mohammad graced our community with a Friday night presentation at Dingman House of his personal story, what his life was like in Sudan, how he came to be a political refugee, his heralding journey out of Sudan and how he landed in the U.S. We all learned a great deal about Mohammad and now know a measure of the pain and sorrow he carries in his heart. He is also dealing with chronic back pain caused by an injury sustained while working in Iowa. He has already had back surgery but it has brought him little relief. Please add your prayers to ours that he may recover his physical and spiritual health.

Jacob Olsen continues to work in the DMACC computer lab and is mastering some of the skills and task necessary to doing hospitality at Dingman House. He now can mop and clean the wood floors in Dingman House and is allowed to fill in when Eddy is not able to do the floors. And he now can make a mean pasta salad for 90. And he's moved from the third-floor bedroom in the attic to a second-floor bed room.

Halsey is the newest member of the community, in his thirty-day tryout period, or as I like to call it our novitiate. He comes to us by way of the Shalom Catholic Worker in Kansas City, KS. Halsey was one of the six Catholic Workers arrested in Kansas City, MO., during the Midwest Catholic Worker Resistance Retreat. He was one of the folks who participated in our Summer Internship. He comes to us well-prepared for a life of service to the poor and faith-based nonviolent resistance.

Joining the crew in Dingman House this summer is Patrick Bears and Colyn Burbank. Both are college students. Patrick is our Notre Dame summer student, and Colyn is from Des Moines and going to school at Central College in Pella, IA. They are bunked out in Dingman's attic. Both participated in the Summer Internship, and both are a great help around the houses. Their enthusiasm and willingness to work are real blessings. Is there any way we can keep these guys?

Richard Flamer, our man in Chiapas was with us for four weeks. It is al-

ways great to see Richard. He helps us keep a perspective on life in the States by sharing with us the stories of the struggles that our Mayan Indian brothers and sisters in Chiapas must face just to survive. He was back in the U.S. to raise monies needed to do the many important projects they have going in Chiapas.

While Richard was back in Des Moines our friend Lois Crilly organized a public panel that included Richard Flamer, Rev. Bob Cook, and Rev. Gil Dawes. Each has direct and extensive experience living and working in Central America. Richard spoke about his life in Chiapas, Rev. Bob talked about his work in El Salvador, and Rev. Gill spoke about living in Panama. They all shared about the mostly negative impact the U.S. has had on each of their adopted countries. It was a very revealing night.

Mona Shaw and I are the two residents in Berrigan House. We both had the privilege of going to Baltimore and spending a week at Jonah House helping to celebrate the 40th Anniversary of the Catonsville Nine draft board action. The best part of the trip was the opportunity to spend quality time with Liz McAlister and Susan Crane. I also got to spend a couple of days at Viva House visiting with Brendan Walsh and Willa Bickham. All and all, it was a rich and fruitful time for both of us. We returned to Des Moines with a deeper appreciation for the peace-making work that we are

Continued on page 11



Norman's Whereabouts

By Norman Searah

Hello! I would like to ask you a personal question.

How are you feeling?

I feel like it's time to end all wars and put away all the things that can hurt this Earth that we call home. I feel like it's time we start talking to each other, even if this means learning another language. I feel like it's time to share and share openly and honestly. We need to teach each other things that can help ourselves and others without asking a price. We all live on this Earth/home. I call it a sand box, and no matter how old we are or how young we are; we're all still children; and we're in this sand box together. And, our Earth,

our home, that gives us water, food, materials to build our homes and more, needs our help.

I don't believe that just a handful of politicians and scientists are going to save this world. But all of us, the poor as much as the rich, must change—even if we don't like it. We need to stop producing nuclear waste and passing it onto the next generation and the next and the next. It's too unfair, especially combined with the other problems we're already passing down.

If there is a God (and I hope there is), and it comes time for me to stand before him or her, I'm going to apologize for leaving behind such a mess for future genera-

tions. And, after this is combined with my other sins, I will accept and take my judgment. But, for now, I see God and the Devil as the landlords working within us toward how well we care for our Earth home.

We need to end all wars. We've seen what Hurricane Katrina did in the Gulf of Mexico and to the southern part of the U.S. I wonder what this year's hurricanes will be like.

People now sell their ocean-front homes along the East coast because there are so many hurricanes. I worry about the nuclear power plants that are near the ocean and whether or not we'll be Europe one day with a

nuclear cloud over us.

The fear brings to mind another kind of cloud that recently hit Parkersburg, Iowa, a small town about 80 miles northwest of Des Moines. A tornado ran a path from Aplington to Dunkerton, and Parkersburg was in that path. It was really big, and so was the damage it did. It flattened most of the town. Of the many tornadoes that have hit Iowa this year, it was the deadliest.

I have to wonder about other parts of the country and world and if they too are experiencing strange and severe weather. I do know most of the glaciers are melting and some are gone. Some have receded into mountains and formed large lakes near

them. Scientists say some glaciers, like the one in Patagonia, Argentina, are retreating at the rate of 180 feet per year.

I could go on, but war has contributed greatly to global warming for years. Both World Wars made horrible impacts on this. We need to change, and we need to change now. Thank you for your time.



Good in Practice: DMCW Summer Internship



by Kate Errthum

Seven participants from four different states joined the Des Moines Catholic Worker Summer Internship, June 11-24, 2008. The two weeks included hands-on experience with the hospitality arm of our community, as well as educational classes and seminars in a variety of subjects regarding the Catholic Worker movement and social justice action.

Kate Errthum from Winona, Minnesota, was one of the interns and wrote the following reflection about the experience.

When goodness and simplicity have been commoditized, where do you go to find the real thing? Like a beacon in the pages of the Via Pacis, the answer that presented itself was the Des Moines Catholic Worker internship. While at the DMCW, I was able to confront some of our bourgeois and capitalist society's most destructive tenets with the support of a loving and feisty community.

It turns out I am not the only person crippled by fear in today's world. It is not merely my personality that causes me to be anxious when confronted with direct action, volunteer poverty, bottom-up solutions, a precarious lifestyle that trusts God, and radical egalitarianism.

Fear and anxiety are consequences of a society focused on efficient "progress" and industrious movement up the wealth and power pyramid. There is a fear of landing at the bottom of the heap—disgraced by labels like lazy, incompetent, and dimwitted. But there doesn't have to be a pyramid. God is certainly not ranking his children. And if God were, the poor would be first.

When I entered the Catholic Worker house, all I could see in civil disobedience were fines, jail sentences, loss of reputation, etc. This fear revealed the severity of my paralysis. While living inside a government massively beyond human scale, while passing the buck to large social programs to solve problems, while being confused at which freedoms have been whittled away in court, my default has been inaction—no even worse—my default has been to not even recognize the possibility of action.

And I call myself a Christian?

I feel as if another dimension has been revealed in my flat world. How truly wonderful that God has deemed me (and you) capable of becoming an agent of action in the world! How truly humbling and exhilarating to know that God expects me (and you) to participate in God's work!

I am just at the beginning stage of reshaping my reality, but I have found great joy in the very simple direct action and work of mercy of serving a meal to the hungry and enjoying that same meal at a shared table.

And so who do I have to thank? A faceless program laced with advertising for t-shirts, mugs, and other merchandise? No, I have a dozen real authen-

tic people to thank. They did not answer my countless questions because it was their job, but because they cared. Mona, Frank, Norman, Eddie, Mike, Mohammed, Kirk, Halsey, Jacob, Matt, Patrick, Colin, Gil, Taylor, Eric, and all the volunteers at the DMCW are the real deal. I feel blessed that we have crossed paths.

I also thank our guests. I asked a young woman who always wears a smile how she stayed so positive. She said she gets her inspiration from her faith in God. She shared how she is looking forward to heaven. She talked like a prophet about the eternal resting place. I have no doubt she will find her reward there. And me? Am I even looking forward to heaven? Hearing her speak made me realize that if I do not change, this privileged life will already have been my reward, just as Jesus warned.

Life should not be heaven to some and hell to others. And if I am thinking like a Catholic Worker, I will not lay in bed worrying if the government will be able to solve all the problems. A Catholic Worker thinks of her hungry neighbors, the homebound and ill, the imprisoned and enslaved, and she acts in the most immediate and effective way to show God's outpouring love. I pray God grants me (and you) the courage.



Left-to-right, front row: Halsey Reynolds, Patrick Bears, Colyn Burbank
Back row: Kate Errthum, Eric Errthum, Gil Landolt, Taylor Hays

A Cry to the Leader

by Taylor Hays

Can you see
The fear in their eyes?
Can you hear,
Their hearts crying out for peace?
No, you can't,
Because you don't want to.
You say you care,
But do you really mean it?
I don't believe,
What you say,
Because you've lied to us,
Too many times.
Did you ask us,
If we wanted this war?
No, you didn't,
But you don't care.
You get paid,
Same as every day.
But down here,
People are suffering.
Not getting paid,
For the work they've done.
Teenagers lose jobs
But they still have to care for their moms.
So what are you going to do?
You are our leader, so do something.
End the war,
Bring home our loved ones.
Stop the violence,
And feed the hungry.
As for me,
I don't want a thing.
Just take care of the others,
Don't worry about me.

Calloused Calamity

by Halsey Reynolds

Latent on the sidewalks,
Exhausting veins for dope.
Watch them mill their fangs.
Tongues bent into knots.

Godot's not coming today,
Yesterday was barren.
Can't get her off your clock,
Indeed,
If it be yours.

Get on with the venue,
Circus freak on their stage.
Give us something to believe,
No living just to breathe.
There's a touch he should procure,
Civil obedience will let you know.

Need something to keep breathing for?
Alas,
What are you waiting for?
Tomorrow you say?
Same death, same life.

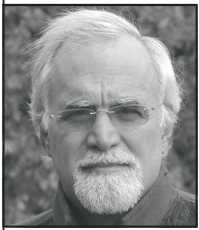
Won't carry us higher,
Feeding the funeral pyre.

Empire, Empire, Empire...



More than 100 people circled at the entrance of the Federal Building in Kansas City, MO, on Monday, April 28, 2008, to protest U.S. immigration policies. The action was the culmination of the 6th Annual Midwest Catholic Workers Resistance Retreat held this year in Kansas City, MO. Six were arrested including, Frank Cordaro, 57, Catholic Worker from Des Moines, Iowa; Eric Garbison, 39, Kansas City Catholic Worker (Cherith Brook House); Mike Leutgeb Munson, 25, Catholic Worker from Winona, MN; Jacob Olzen, a peace activist from Roselle, IL; Harold "Halsey" Reynolds IV, 30, then of the Kansas City, KS, Catholic Worker (Shalom House) and now a Catholic Worker in Des Moines; and Henry Stoeber, 59, attorney and peace activist from Overland Park, KS.

Celebrating Catonsville 9's 40th Anniversary



by Frank
Cordaro

Personal Epiphanies that go on and on...

Last month Mona Shaw and I had the privilege of spending a week in Baltimore, Maryland, at Jonah House to help celebrate the 40th Anniversary of the Catonsville Nine witness, a protest that started one of the most successful and effective civil disobedience campaigns in US history.

On May 17, 1968, during the height of the Vietnam War, nine Catholic peace activists entered the Catonsville, Maryland, draft board office located on the second floor of the local Knights of Columbus Hall and removed 378 draft files. The files were mostly 1-A records, which corresponded to young men considered available for immediate and unrestricted military service in Vietnam. Together the nine activists took the draft files to the parking lot of the building—with reporters and camera men watching—set the files ablaze with homemade napalm, recited a prayer, made statements and awaited arrest.

The Catonsville Nine were Father Daniel Berrigan, Father Philip Berrigan, David Darst, John Hogan, Thomas Lewis, Marjorie Melville, Thomas Melville, George Mische, and Mary Moylan. Together and with the help of a support team of about fifty close friends, they made international television, radio, and newspaper headlines.

There were fifty-some similar actions across the country and between three to four million draft files destroyed with these efforts. A short list of the draft board actions includes the Boston Two, the Milwaukee 14, the Chicago 15, Pasadena Three, Silver Spring Three, Women against Daddy Warbucks, Rochester Flower City Conspiracy, Beaver 55, East Coast Conspiracy to Save Lives in Philadelphia, DC Nine, Manhattan Five, New York Eight, Boston Eight, Minnesota Eight, and the Camden 28.

Yet the greatest achievement the flames

ignited at Catonsville may not have been its immediate, visible and effective success in destroying draft files and ending the Vietnam War. The most lasting and enduring testimony of the flames ignited at Catonsville may well lie with the people it changed and the lives altered in its aftermath.

When thinking of the web of human lives affected by the Catonsville Nine action, many not directly affected at the time came under its spell years after the witness. That's certainly been the case in my connection with Catonsville.

1968

Recalling the Catonsville 9 impact in ten-year intervals, in 1968 I was in my last two years at Dowling High School, one of two Catholic High Schools in the city of Des Moines. Dowling was an all-boys school and St. Joseph Academy was all girls. My father was a coach and the athletic director at Dowling at the time. My life ambition consisted of playing football with the hope of securing an athletic scholarship. Our school was situated in the middle of one of the poorest Black neighborhoods in the city, and our family was leading the effort to get the school moved to the west side of town to a bigger plot of land in a much more affluent neighborhood.

Despite all the social and political turmoil taking place in the nation and in our own city surrounding the issues of poverty, racism and the Vietnam War, I—except for the drive to and from school—was completely insulated from these events. I was solidly behind our nation's Vietnam War effort and believed the advocates for civil rights were way too pushy.

My true allegiance came to the surface when some of the smartest and brightest members of my class published an alternative newspaper called the *Sober Eye* suggesting that the Vietnam War was immoral and that Dowling high school should consider staying in the inner city as a sign of support and solidarity to the struggling poor and Black families who were our neighbors. I led the charge at school to have these guys kicked out for being unpatriotic and an embarrassment to our school! When I first heard of the Catonsville Nine I felt ashamed and angry that Catholics, especially

Catholic priests, had acted so unpatriotically.

1978

Ten years later, in 1978, I found myself back in the same neighborhood I feared so much in high school. Only at this time, we were two years into creating a Catholic Worker community in Des Moines.

I had won that athletic scholarship that I wanted in high school and attended the University of Northern Iowa (UNI). I played football, wrestled, and earned a B.A. in Physical Education and Health. I also found Jesus in college, read the New Testament (for what seemed to be the first time), and made a commitment to follow this newly discovered Jesus wherever "He" led me. Upon graduating from college, I entered the seminary to become a priest. I spent my first summer in an African American parish in the South Bronx and my second summer at the Catholic Worker in Davenport, Iowa. In my third year of seminary I fell in love, dropped out of the seminary and helped start the Des Moines Catholic Worker.

Most importantly, I had undergone a major metanoia, a transformation of mind and heart, between 1968 and 1978 from being a pro-USA Empire, pro-rich, pro-war Catholic to an anti-USA-Empire, pro-poor, pacifist Catholic. The discovery of Dorothy Day and the Catholic Worker movement had a great deal to do with my transformation. However, my full spiritual makeover was complete only after meeting the Berrigan brothers, Dan and Phil. Once I discovered who Dan and Phil Berrigan were, I made every effort to seek them out. I would travel days to go listen to them whenever they were in the Midwest.

It was during this time that I was re-introduced to the events surrounding the Catonsville Nine witness and its significance to the Vietnam Anti-War movement. And I witnessed its influence and formational importance to a growing faith-based, nonviolent, resistance peace movement that was taking shape in the post-Vietnam War years of which I was a part.

In the summer of 1977 I traveled to Baltimore, Maryland, to join others for a Jonah House Summer Nonviolent Resistance Training Session. The two-week immersion experience ended at the

Pentagon on August 9th, the anniversary of the USA A-bombing of Nagasaki, Japan. I did my first act of civil disobedience with a spilling of blood on the Pentagon pillars. I was immediately arrested and thrown in jail. Fifteen days later, I went to trial, was found guilty and spent another fifteen days in jail. The experience was life-changing, and I have not been the same since.

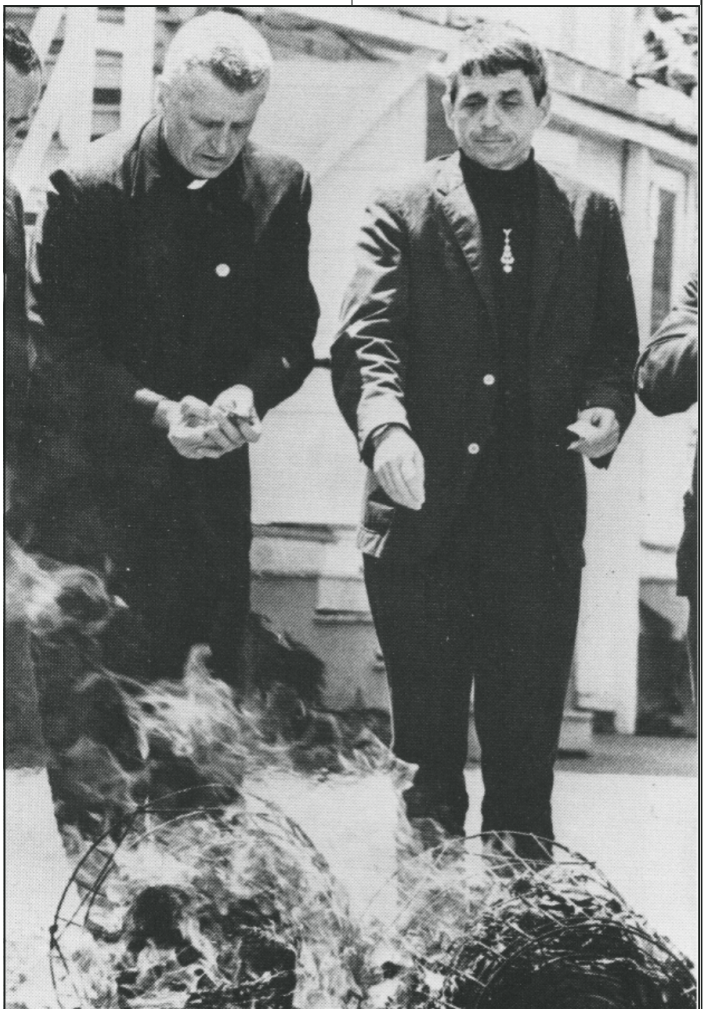
By the time the Berrigans were released from federal prison for the Catonsville Nine witness, the Vietnam War was winding down, leaving Phil and Dan Berrigan and kindred anti-war resisters to discern where to go from there. Phil and Liz McAlister started their family and founded Jonah House, a full-time resistance community in Baltimore, Maryland. Dan returned to the NYC Jesuit community. They never stopped their resistance ways. With others on the East Coast, they started showing up at the Pentagon, doing blood spilling witnesses on the Pentagon pillars. Their focus shifted at these actions from a specific war to the war machine itself, and more specifically toward the nuclear arms race. Choosing blood as their medium was intentional and profound. Spilling blood on the Pentagon pillars exposed the Pentagon for what it really is, a temple of death, and a squanderer of life.

I remember well these havens of discernment at

Jonah House. After my 1977 witness at the Pentagon I made it a point to visit Jonah House at least once or twice each year. It was at this time I started to see Dan and Phil as my "Rabbis" and Jonah House as the Mother House for the growing faith-based, non-violent, resistance tribe. I was a disciple of their school of studies and practices in biblical peacemaking. I remember a conversation I had with Bishop Dingman during this time after he asked me what it was about Jonah House that most impressed me. I told the Bishop it was that they based everything they said and did on the scriptures. By my lights they were following the Jesus I had discovered and promised to follow when I had been a student at UNI.

A lesson I learned in my summer of 1977 was that if we were going to stop the war machine we were going to have to take personal responsibility toward making that happen. The wisdom the folks at Jonah House passed on from the Catonsville Nine was that we can't wait for the Church big "C" nor Church leadership to take the necessary action to make peace happen. We needed to stop looking backwards to the Church to start fulfilling the Gospel mandate to be peacemakers. Instead we needed to look forward and be the "Church"

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Phillip and Daniel Berrigan toss lit matches on burning draft records in Catonsville, MD, in 1968.

Catonsville 9's 40th Anniversary

Continued from page 5

by bringing the nonviolent fight for peace directly to the State and its war-making machine. In doing so, we put flesh and bones on our Church's peace and justice statements and helped put the Church on record to be the peacemakers they profess to be.

1988

Ten years later, in 1988, I am a parish priest serving the Catholic rural communities in Harrison County, Iowa. I had fallen out of love, left the DMCW in 1983, requested to re-enter the ordination process on the rebound, spent two years time in the seminary at St John's in Collegeville, Minnesota, and, to the surprise of many, me included, was ordained by Blessed Bishop Dingman in 1985 to the Diocese of Des Moines. By 1988, I was three years into an experiment with my diocese to develop a model of parish-based priestly ministry that included nonviolent resistance. During these years I was organizing as many farm protests as I was anti war protest at Offutt AFB.

By 1988 Dan and Phil Berrigan and the other folks at Jonah House were deep into Stage Two of the ripple effects of the Catonsville Nine witness, a.k.a., the Plowshares Movement. In 1980, eight Catholic peace activists entered a General Electric weapons factory in King of Prussia, Pennsylvania, and took hammers to and poured blood on the nose cones of Mark-12 nuclear missiles. Dubbed the Plowshares Eight they initiated what came to be known as the Plowshares Movement. The Berrigan brothers were among the eight.

The Plowshares Eight Witness was a direct outcome of their post Catonsville years of discernment, based on their proactive reading of the scriptures and their clear reading of the times. By 1980 the human race was under the threat of extinction by a runaway nuclear arms race. The next logical faith step in the journey that started in 1968 with the Catonsville Nine witness was the Plowshares Witnesses.

Taking to heart the words of the universalist, nonviolent Prophet Isaiah (as found in Isaiah 2:4: "[nations] shall beat their swords into plowshares... nor shall they train for war again"), Plowshares activists personally attempt, through direct action, to disarm nuclear weapons as well as weapons deliv-

ery systems and the factories that manufacture them. Their tools for disarmament are primarily and essentially their own bodies, plus the symbolic tools, such as the hammers and blood, they bring with them.

Building upon lessons learned with Catonsville and knowing the world can't wait for the Church ("big C") and its Church leadership to take the action needed to stop the nuclear arms race (noble statements not withstanding), Plowshares activists knew they would have to be the "Church" that they wanted to see in the world. And so, they began the process of nuclear disarmament, one person, one weapon, one hammer at a time. Since 1980, more than 80 different Plowshares actions have taken place on three different continents, and a couple hundred activists have cumulatively served several hundreds of years of jail time for their actions.

As soon as I heard news of the Plowshares Eight witness, I understood the truth and rightness of their actions. I also knew I needed to stay as far away as possible from joining a Plowshares witness. The heavy price and serious consequences of participating in such witnesses served as a great deterrent for me. Besides, my resistance plate was full. My recent "line crossings" at Strategic Air Command (SAC) in Omaha landed me a sure six months sentence. It cost me six months each and every time I crossed onto Offutt AFB's property line and that was all the jail time I felt I need to take on. Besides, my life as a parish priest, and my experiment with my diocese to wed parish-based and ministry with resistance was worthy of my time and energy.

Still, the call to do a Plowshares Witness was never far from my heart and soul. I began to measure my life's work by its value in lieu of my not doing a Plowshares Witness.

1998

By 1998 my experiment in developing a parish-based resistance model of priestly ministry had come to an end. Neither the bishop nor the priests on the personnel board were open to my continued resistance ways. With my options for doing resistance in my diocese coming to an end, the call to become part of a Plowshares Witness came again; and I felt I no

longer had any good excuses for not joining.

On May 17, 1998, I was one of five in the Gods of Metal Plowshares witness at Andrews Air Force Base in southern Maryland near Washington, D.C. Jonah House Community members Sisters Ardeth Platte OP and Carol Gilbert OP, plus Washington, D.C. Catholic Worker Kathleen Boylan, Peoria Diocese Priest Father Larry Morlan, and I took hammers and blood to a B-52 bomber that was on display during Andrews annual Air Show. That our witness took place on the 30th Anniversary of the Catonsville Nine witness was not lost on the five of us. We intentionally whacked the B-52 thirty times in all to represent the 30 years that separated our Plowshares Witness and the Catonsville Nine Witness. That we acted on the anniversary of Catonsville Nine was a happy happenstance to what I believed to be a direct link between Catonsville and my faithful journey with the Catholic Worker, the Berrigan brothers, Jonah House and the U.S. faith-based non violent resistance movement.

For me, the most direct and personal connection between Catonsville and our plowshares witness was the measure of risk. Prior to considering this Plowshares witness the likely consequences for my acts of civil disobedience were manageable and usually predictable. With convictions always in the misdemeanor range, I knew I was never risking anything more than a few months in jail. My "line crossings" at Offutt AFB were the most predictable of my direct action efforts. By the mid-1980s each time I trespassed onto Offutt property I received a six-month sentence. This sentence did not change for my eight subsequent crossings (including twice since the Gods of Metal Plowshares witness). The threat and fear of going to jail for six months became manageable and almost routine. By the time I stood before a federal judge in Omaha to be sentenced for line crossing at Offutt, I felt I was in control. My life's responsibilities were arranged, and my jail support team was intact. To not be sentenced to six months incarceration would have been a disappointment.

Entering into the Plowshares process I found no predictability of the outcome or consequences. I might have been risking many months if not years of imprisonment. This made doing a plowshares witness quantitatively and



Cathy Boylan hammers and Frank Cordaro pours blood on a B-52 at the Andrews Air Force Base Air Show in 1998 Plowshares Witness.

therefore qualitatively different from any other risk I had taken for peace before. My fears were real and at times paralyzing. My prayer life was never more intense and meaningful. I had left my parish and diocese without permission. I had also left my mother who was in the early stages of Alzheimer. The thought that after serving a lengthy sentence that I could return home to a mother, who (if she were still alive) would not know who I was, was breaking my heart. Every meaningful relationship I had at the time was under great stress; some were lost.

It was at this level of "truth and consequences" that I felt I most personally connected with the Catonsville Nine witness. Their risk was open-ended also. They had no idea how hard the state was going to come down on them. It was very possible that they could have spent many, many years in prison for their actions with bridges burnt and relationships lost; and, yet they acted anyway.

For the Gods of Metal Plowshares, within weeks of the arrest, the Federal District Attorney lowered the original multiple Federal felony charges (that carried up to 30 years in jail) for all us down to one misdemeanor destruction of property charge (less than a \$1,000 damages) that carried no more than a year in jail. As soon as I heard this news my whole world changed. My old life was given back to me. This degree of consequence was familiar, and I felt somewhat back in control.

2008

Now comes May 17, 2008, the 40th Anniversary of the Catonsville Nine and the 10th Anniversary of our Gods of Metal Plowshares witness. Much has changed since I took hammer and blood to that B-52 Bomber at Andrews AFB.

After serving a six-month sentence for my Plowshares effort (a sweet deal by the standards of Plowshares actions), I returned to my diocese and was still open to continuing my priestly service. After months of delicate negotiations and a year of voluntary leave of absence, a compromise was struck between me and my Bishop. The agreement was that I could no longer speak publicly about changes I wanted to see in my Church. Specifically that meant I could not publicly call for the ordination of women as priests, nor could I advocate that the Church re-evaluate its stand on sexual matters having to do with birth control or its position on LGBT people and their families. Finally I could no longer openly organize for a more open, transparent and democratic governing structure within the Catholic Church. In exchange for this, the diocese would be open to my continued resistance efforts on a case-by-case basis. An added plus in all this was that I was permitted to take up residence at the Des Moines Catholic Worker. My sixteen-year absence from the Des Moines Catholic Worker had come to an end. I began a series of six month temporary parish assignments.

In September, 2001, I had a life-threatening heart attack, and it took an entire year to fully recover. It took another year for me to come to my senses. Choosing life over death, I petitioned the Bishop for yet another year's leave of absence. I needed to decide once and for all if I wanted to remain a priest. Through it all I remained faithful to my nonviolent resisting ways. I formally resigned from active priestly life in August of 2004. Soon after, we opened the Phil Berrigan Catholic Worker House in the original house where

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The Absence of There in Electoral Politics



By
Mona Shaw

"If voting made any difference, it would be illegal."

Phillip Berrigan

I was a junior in high school when our gym teacher decided to teach us how to play golf. She had acquired an afternoon pass at the local country club where we took turns using a bag of borrowed clubs. Learning to play golf is not only learning the rules or developing the skills to play the game, it requires significant knowledge about the equipment (putters, drivers, woods and irons, etc.) as well the courses where it is played. One can feel quite clever learning and retaining this information then impressing others with all one knows about the game.

It's a lot like electoral politics. It's a good game in theory, and offers a fair amount of intellectual gratification to know a lot about it; but at the end of the day, if you don't have

the money for the clubs and the green fees, you don't get to play.

This spring I immersed myself in a social justice experiment that allowed me to analyze the value of electoral politics in creating positive change. It would be unfair to report that I found no hope for change within electoral politics. On the other hand, it is generous to state there is less hope for change to found in electoral politics than investing commensurate effort into collecting troll dolls or wishing on a star.

Truth and democracy in Johnson County, Iowa, are like they are any place else. You cannot have a functional democracy without the truth. Unfortunately, in electoral politics Truth is always the first players kicked off the team. The fact that candidates lie, are groomed to lie, and are rejected if they're not willing to lie, spin, hedge, obfuscate, or otherwise deny the truth is so accepted that we now choose candidates based as much on the hope they are lying as on the hope

they are not. If I had a dollar for each time I've heard someone defend a candidate's questionable position by saying "Well she/he has to say that to get elected," I could probably afford to buy my very own candidate.

And, the problem with elected officials is that they never stop being candidates. Every remark, gesture, and action is carefully calculated according to how well it will translate into campaign contributions and reelection returns at the ballot box. A candidate's "electability" holds far higher currency than a candidate's character.

The day politics became a career is the day democracy died. On that day serving the people took second place to keeping the job. And when this happened we began to hold political office and office holders in higher esteem than the People. Our heart is where our treasure is. And treasuring the "job" spawned other treasures or "jobs." From pollsters to pundits to campaign

managers to lobbyists to corporate CEOs, new treasures took so much from us that there was no heart left for the People.

The toxic waste brewed by reverence for the "job" has seeped into and hijacked the conscience of the culture-at-large. It has poisoned our souls to the degree that we will spill our last cup of decency before we will sacrifice a drop of sycophancy on the job. We have become so morally frail with this sickness that we will allow not only the children of others but our own children to be murdered in a war that we know to be hideously immoral before we will risk our jobs by publicly offending the powers that allow this to happen.

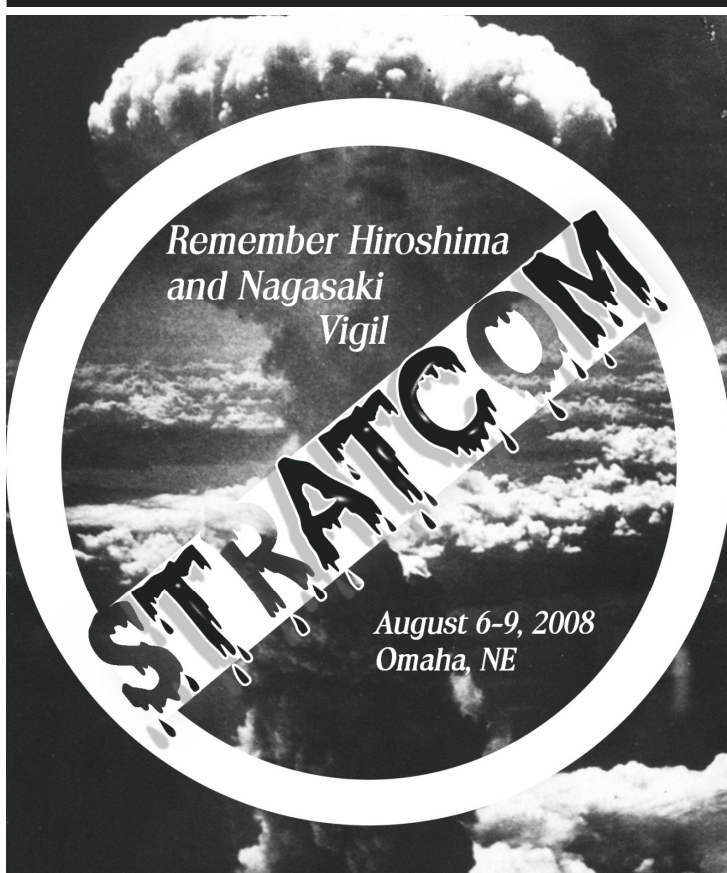
It is frequently suggested (or at least hoped) that an antidote to the corruption in national politics is deeper participation in local politics. In local politics the stakes are not so high, nor as wickedly entrenched. On the local level you're dealing with people you know rather than personally-detached

corporate interests, depraved lobbyists, and the other shepherds of career politicians who prize their own jobs most of all.

The connection between local and global politics is an inescapable reality. As Tip O'Neill's father once advised, "all politics is local," (even though this advice was driven by a desire to win the "job"). Even if local politics holds no answers, it is an elementary template that instructs where we go wrong.

I chose to study this template by running for the office of County Auditor in Johnson County, Iowa. I had witnessed first-hand (while an account clerk in the Johnson County Auditor's Office from 2004-06) how the incumbent auditor had brutally and routinely abused his staff, willfully violated their negotiated labor contract and federal laws, and systematically discriminated against women and people of color. The Auditor's abuse and the suffering it

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Annual STRATCOM Vigil remembers Hiroshima and Nagasaki

The Des Moines and Omaha Catholic Worker Communities invite you to join us for our annual 3-1/2-day "shake and bake" vigil at the gates of Offutt Air Force Base, in Bellevue, NE, home of the Strategic Nuclear (StratCom) and the US Military Space Commands.

This year's vigil begins at the Kinney gate and main entrance of Offutt Air Force Base, Wednesday, Aug 6, 2008, at 8 a.m., the hour the United States dropped the first atomic

bomb on Hiroshima. The vigil ends Saturday, August 9, at 11 a.m., the hour the U.S. dropped the second atomic bomb on Nagasaki.

Come stand, pray and do penance with us. Share our hope for peace as on the anniversary of the US atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan, on August 6 and 9, 1945. Contemplate with us the work and mission Offutt AFB's horrific Commands, the challenges they pose to all life on our

planet, and the evil claim the hold on the soul and spirit of our nation.

The vigil starts at 8 a.m. and stops at 5 p.m. each day except August 9. On the final day, August 9, the vigil concludes with a prayer circle and possible line crossing at 11 a.m. We also hope to join others in Omaha for evening programs focusing on the commemoration of the A-bombings of 1945 and related concerns of today.

Overnight hospitality is available starting Tuesday evening August 5th. Call and let us know you are coming. Expect floor space and bring your own bed roll.

Everyone is welcome. Come for an hour or for the entire three days.

Events are co-sponsored by Nebraskans for Peace (nebraskansforpeace.org), the Des Moines Catholic Worker, and Omaha Catholic Worker (no-nukes.org/cwomaha).

For more information, contact:

Jerry Ebner
cwomaha@gmail.com
402-502-5887

Frank Cordaro
frank.cordaro@gmail.com
515-282-4781

Elaine Wells
mmwells1@cox.net
402-573-1702

STRATCOM Vigil Schedule

Tuesday, August 5

Evening: Vigil-ers arrive in Omaha set up base in the basement of St John's Church, Creighton University. Anyone needing a bed or any other special accommodations please contact Jerry Ebner at the Omaha CW. cwomaha@gmail.com, 402-502-5887

Wednesday, August 6

8 a.m. to 5 p.m.: Vigil at Offutt/STRATCOM, the Kenny Gate

7 p.m.: Movie, *The Day After Trinity: J Robert Oppenheimer and the Atomic Bomb*, at the Natural Kind Café, 302 S 38th St., between Harney (one-way going East) and Farnam (one-way going West)

Thursday, August 7

8 a.m. to 5 p.m.: Vigil at Offutt /STRATCOM, the Kenny Gate

6 p.m.: Mass and Potluck at Omaha CW – Contact Jerry Ebner Omaha Catholic Worker, cwomaha@gmail.com, 402-502-5887

Friday, August 8

8 a.m. to 5 p.m.: Vigil at Offutt /STRATCOM, the Kenny Gate

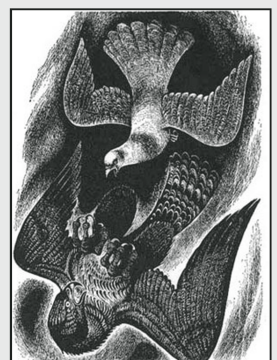
7 p.m.: Power Point Show "The Story of STRATCOM at Offutt, its new mission and our resistance to it" by Frank Cordaro in the basement of St John's Church at Creighton University.

Saturday, August 9

8 a.m. to 11 a.m. Vigil with closing ceremony and prayer (and line crossing, if anyone feels called.)

6:00 p.m. Peace Seekers and Pizza

7:00 p.m. discussion, reflection and leadership support at 4924 Chicago Street; contact person is Jo Peterson at 350-3019.



The Absence of There in Electoral Politics

Continued from page 6

caused wasn't the worst case of human suffering in the world or even the County. Then again, choosing the suffering one will address on the basis of it being the "worst" suffering is a snare that can restrain us from addressing any suffering at all. Plus, this was suffering wrought within County government itself, and if the public officials of the County couldn't practice the principles they espoused within their own ranks, how could they be trusted to engender these for citizens-at-large?

While confronting human suffering within the electoral political process seemed functionally inadequate for, if not contrary to, expressing the personalist philosophy of a Catholic Worker, I couldn't knowledgeably state there was no redress for suffering in the process unless I sincerely tried it.

In theory it should have been an easy fix. And, if the incumbent had been a Republican, I wager it would have been. Johnson County is renowned as the most "progressive" county in Iowa by far. Organized labor, civil rights advocacy, and progressive politics reputedly rule the political scene to the degree that detractors and fans alike refer to it as the "People's Republic of Johnson County." People in Johnson County, after all, were up-in-arms when former Congressman Jim Leach insensitively used mock Native American headdresses as campaign paraphernalia, and they put a stop to it.

However, in this case, the incumbent was a Democrat who self-identified as a "liberal progressive." He was a donor to most women's and human rights causes, made appearances at their public functions, served on area human rights committees, and was one of the first public officials to grace the stage at Iowa City's annual Gay Pride Festival. And, ironically, he had even hosted an international meeting on torture.

Even so, in his official role, he fell far short of "walking the walk." Still, it seemed reasonable to assume that all that was required was documentation or "proof" that a public official, regardless of partisanship, had committed outrageous violations of labor laws and human rights principles in order for a public official to be held accountable and then required to change or leave. Initially, I naively believed that once proof was provided that labor leaders, women's, civil

rights, peace and justice activists, and "progressive" public officials would insist on the same.

I had towers of documentation compiled over a two-year span. My greatest barrier had not been establishing the veracity of this "proof," but finding anyone willing to look at it. I was repeatedly advised by public leaders or justice advocates that before the matter could be considered that all the existing resources for addressing these grievances must first be exhausted. I took this advice and exhausted every available resource at least once and most more than twice.

A factor that worked against my credibility was despite years of abuse and discrimination, not a single employee had filed an employee grievance. If it were true, they would have, right? While several had complained confidentially to Human Resources as well as staff in the County Attorney's office, they were too afraid of retaliation to confront the Auditor formally or directly. Human Resources would tell us that since these employees would not formally and directly complain, the hands of the County Attorney's Office and H.R.'s were tied from doing anything about it.

I not only filed the first employee grievance against the Auditor. I filed eight. It was more than a little dispiriting to witness a "feminist" assistant county attorney (another Democrat who would later be elected County Attorney) help the auditor identify "technicalities" (typos on filing dates, etc.) in order to dismiss two of these grievances to avoid their hearing. I was told this was personally painful for her since she knew he was "guilty as sin," but that she was just "doing her job." Only one grievance was denied, and one was upheld. The others were resolved because the Auditor's violation of the contract was so flagrant that he capitulated to negotiated remedies again to avoid the finding a formal hearing would obviously bring. (Labor grievances require the employee list a remedy, and if the employer agrees to the remedy the grievance is considered resolved. And, while I was the first employee to file a grievance in the Auditor's Office, the trail was blazed, and I was not the last.)

After awhile my Union representative would essentially tell me "You've become almost frighteningly good at arguing and

winning these grievances. You'll no doubt keep winning most of them. But my time is being swallowed up by this, and there is nothing in the grievance process that can make a public official stop violating the law or even our contract. He can keep violating both. You can keep grieving it. But we can't stop him from doing it again. Eventually he'll find some way to fire you that will stick, and you'll be stopped anyway. My best advice to you is to let this go and find another job." Legal violations by public officials, I was told, are a matter for the State Attorney General to address not the Union or the County.

So, I faxed an outline of my documentation to the State Attorney General (a Democrat) and asked to meet with a member of his staff. My fax was likely still in the printer when I received an email from the Attorney General, himself, declining to meet with me and stating that my concerns belonged in the jurisdiction of federal agencies or with the Iowa City Human Rights Commission. My reply email asking if I could meet just once with someone from his office was ignored. A former deputy in the Auditor's office would tell me later that as soon as my fax had appeared, the Attorney General's Office phoned the Auditor and reassured him nothing would be done with my complaint.

I took the Attorney General's advice and filed a complaint with the Iowa City Human Rights Commission. Without explanation (or even telling me), the Iowa City office, rather than review it themselves, forwarded the 34-page complaint along with several hundred pages of grievance settlements and other documentation to the State Human Rights Commission in Des Moines. Without a single follow-up question or any manner of meeting or conversation with the Com-

mission, after several months and after failing to meet its own required deadline, I received notification that the Commission was "administratively closing" the complaint without an investigation because the information provided was insufficient to proceed. The notice was clear that the Commission was NOT stating that discrimination and retaliation had NOT occurred, but only that they were choosing not to investigate it. No response was given to my concern of a possible conflict of interest in the Des Moines office given that the chair of the Iowa Civil Rights Commission is one of the Johnson County Auditor's closest friends. Even though I had proven that this same friend at the onset of my first employee grievance had, at the Auditor's bidding and with ethical violations of his own, solicited others to bully me into dropping it. The Commission, however, did advise me that I was still free with an attorney to sue on my own.

I had retained an attorney with borrowed money and was ready to proceed until I realized two things. First, it's simply wrong when Civil Rights protections only work (as is usually the case) if the victim has the personal cash to enforce them. Second, holding an elected official accountable for violating the law is not a winnable option. Even if I persevered through the two or so years it would likely take to bring my case to court, and even if judge and jury agreed I'd proven my case, the most I could win were the actual damages the discrimination had cost me. Moreover, if the County chose to "settle" by offering a cash payout close to these damages without admitting guilt, I could be forced to accept the settlement. I didn't want money. I wanted justice. I wanted to end discrimination against women and employee abuse in the Auditor's Office. And, there

was nothing provided in the Federal Civil Rights Act, the Code of Iowa or any of our courts that could keep a public official from doing it again. And again.

I hauled my full basket of "exhausted resources" back to those I'd first approached. "Well, of course," they said rolling their eyes as if this information were as common as prayer on Election Day, "the only way to hold a public official accountable for labor or civil rights violations is to get them voted out of office." And, so, when no one else would do so, I filed to run against the Auditor.

Support I'd received up to that point was wildly enthusiastic compared to the support I received in the Campaign and led to a rehash of partisan centralism that was itchingly petty and mostly too dull and repetitive to report. The first response came after I announced my candidacy on a Johnson County Democrats for America email list I'd belonged to for years. This list was created to support candidates who championed progressive causes outside the comfort level of the Democratic Party mainstream. The moderator (a former candidate for chair of the Johnson County Democratic Party) responded to my announcement by kicking me off the list because he considered accusing the Auditor of sex discrimination to be a personal attack.

"Just because something is true doesn't mean you have to say it," he wrote.

Not once did anyone tell me in public or in private that they didn't believe the accusations I'd made. Not once. Direct responses to my candidacy were actually scarce and basically fell into four groups.

- Those who supported me publicly. All six of them.

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Since our last issue of via pacis...

More than one million have died from war, torture, and neglect.

110 military personnel have been killed in the war in Iraq.

79 military personnel have been killed in the war in Afghanistan.

6,250 Americans have died because they don't have health insurance.

30,000,000 have needed groceries from a food bank.

What are you doing about it?

RESIST

Catonsville 9 Anniversary

Continued from page 6

we had started the Des Moines Catholic Worker. I am literally living in the same room that I lived in when I helped start the Catholic Worker back in 1976.

The challenge these days is to take the lessons learned over the last 40 years and try to apply them to the times in which we live. If my journey has taught me anything it has taught me that life can come at me in the full circles of a spiral with the same events and people teaching and guiding me with each new curve in the spiral. Without a doubt,

the flames ignited with the Catonsville Nine Witness in May of 1968 have played a major role in my life's journey and the brothers Dan and Phil Berrigan, Jonah House and the Plowshares Movement continue to be guiding lights and points of reference for me and many others in these troubled and challenging times.



The Loaves and Fishes Catholic Worker Community in Duluth, Minnesota, together with the Anathoth Community in Luck, Wisconsin, will host the 2008 annual Midwest Catholic Worker gathering at Sugar Creek in Cedar County in Iowa, September 19 - 21.

Contact information:

Greg Boertje-Obed
218-728-0629
obedsinduluth@yahoo.com

Mike Miles
715-472-8721
anathoth@lakeland.ws

The Absence of There in Electoral Politics

Continued from page 8

- Those who would vote for me privately, but not say so publicly. "I'm voting for you, and I admire you, but I can't afford to risk my job, career promotion, tenure promotion, donor base, client base, re-election campaign, merchandising campaign, political career, professional career, academic grade, University Athletic Club status, dating pool, etc., etc., by being publicly associated with you.

- Those who believed the Auditor was guilty but refused to vote for or endorse me because they disapproved of what I'd done or not done about it.

- Those who believed the Auditor was guilty but felt partisan loyalty required supporting him anyway.

All but the first group were lying, if not to me then to someone else. The same way rust is the glue that holds an old jalousy together, lying is the mortar between the decaying bricks of electoral politics. Without lies, the whole machine falls apart.

So, when an Iowa state senator told an employee in the Auditor's Office, "Don't worry, we're making sure you won't lose Tom." The employee wasn't sure if the senator was really that oblivious about their working conditions or shooting a veiled threat toward anyone else who might think to complain about it. In either event, they knew compassion for them was not the senator's priority.

Democratic Party leadership was as irritated as an infected mosquito bite at a flea family reunion to be forced to determine how to discredit someone who'd exposed one of their own and not risk appearing to condone the malpractice I'd exposed. As one labor leader put it, "Mona couldn't care less if this damages the Party's image or threatens the

fragile complexities of political relationships that it's taken us years to cultivate."

The first tact was to simply ignore or attempt to quash these allegations from public view.

The local press, paranoid about unlikely law suits, wouldn't even print the allegations in quotes. Party-loyal forum moderators limited the questions to issues that didn't consider them. They did not hide their disapproval when I squeezed as many as I could into 30-second intervals anyway.

The second tact was whispering wrinkled-nose insults that were as amusing as hurtful and that came back to me quickly.

"She's not a team player." (How would they know? We've not played on the same team.)

"If the choice is between a communist and a drunk (alluding to the Auditor's DUIs and driving employees while drunk), you pick the drunk." (It's not just that I'm not a Communist but, given the notorious Vodka consumption by leaders of the former Soviet Union, can such a distinction even be made?)

"If she's elected, she'll use that office to end the war in Iraq." (Well, only if that's possible.)

The most peculiar criticism was that I'd disqualified myself by being too personal. A party official attempted to explain this to me by pointing out that I couldn't be objective because I had been personally victimized by the Auditor. When I asked him if he might then publicly take up the matter, he explained, although he believed it to be true, he wasn't qualified because he had not personally witnessed the abuse himself. When I asked him who then was qualified to take

the problem to the public he said, "That's a good question."

I might have taken the critique of being too personal as a compliment, had I been able to increase any palpable effect of personalism within party ranks. I'd documented that the lives of at least eight women and an African American man had their lives thrown into upheaval from fleeing the Auditor's mistreatment and discrimination, and one woman had even won workman's compensation based on her claim that her health had been damaged to the point she couldn't work because of the Auditor's abuse. Despite the fact that I knew these cases to be the tip of the iceberg, not one single person in a position to do something about it ever came to me expressing personal interest, let alone compassion, for these workers.

Not a single feminist, peace and justice, or labor group or leader came forward to stand up for these workers. In fact, holding more regard for loyalty to power than confronting the abuse of power, a number even publicly endorsed the Auditor. At least two of these leaders privately acknowledged they knew he was guilty. (The fact that I was the only candidate on the Johnson County Democratic Primary ballot not a white, heterosexual man by itself reveals a story.)

In any event—to them all—the fact that I had publicly said that the Auditor had done these things was more interesting, controversial and disturbing than the fact that the Auditor had done them.

It's a wrenching thing to discover that the worker and human rights protections we've worked so hard to win are worthless to those who need them most. It's sobering to realize that all I've accomplished after a lifetime of

human rights advocacy is that I've helped a handful of already over-privileged people get better jobs.

By the time Election Day arrived, I would have been stunned to win fifty votes. Not only shunned by the party in power, I'd run a provocatively unconventional campaign. I'd taken no campaign contributions, printed no buttons or yards signs, mailed no campaign leaflets, held no fund-raisers, ran no newspaper or radio ads, nor reeled in one "big name" endorsement. I put up a web-site and sent out a broadcast email to about 700 people pointing them to it, attended two public candidate forums, and simply told the truth.

I also refused to tout my "professional" accomplishments because it's supposed to be true that any common citizen with obvious intelligence, talent, and conviction should be as eligible to serve in public office as those with credentials only available to the economically privileged. In this context, I surfaced as the only candidate who took my candidacy seriously. The rest were in it for the stunt of proving their electability and scoring the job.

It is necessary to reveal, and for honest justice seekers to realize, that, even on the local level, electoral politics does not make good use of our time. It isn't that you can't help people unless you win. It's that you can't help people if you do. The beast is all belly and devours all heart. Wherever there is heart for healing human suffering lies, however harsh or not harsh that suffering may be, heart is not *there*. We need to stop looking there. We cannot make change in a temple controlled by the money-lenders and other masters of evil.

Even though I lost the election, I received far more than fifty votes. I

received 31% of them. I collected nearly the percentage received by Ed Fallon (a self-identified "progressive" U.S. congressional candidate for Iowa's third district) who went into debt for his race, and as much as a previous candidate who'd challenged the Auditor; both had run full-blown campaigns with "power-house" endorsements and had played by party rules. I received 60% of the vote in some low-income precincts. Not surprisingly, I lost by the highest margins in precincts where mostly affluent, "liberal" Democrats reside.

Hope for humanity lies with that 31 percent, those who see through the lies and are ready to act to end suffering if someone just shows a way. When we treasure them, rather than the electoral political machine where moths corrupt and thieves steal, we treasure justice.

The call for justice isn't for those who have to be talked into it but for those who can't be talked out of it. Change isn't wrought by holding a high-minded opinion or spending five minutes in a voting booth. Change is measured by the amount of personal sacrifice and human equity we're willing to put on the line.

Evil isn't wrought by systems, including electoral politics, it's wrought by people who have constructed systems to make it easier to commit evil.

Change will not come from coddling or compromising with the masters of war, torture, suffering, and evil. It will come as we, more and more, take the evidence of the suffering they are causing to their doorstep, call them to repentance, and then refuse to leave until their hearts are touched enough that they emerge from their temples and join us in making that change.



On January 11, 2008, hundreds descended on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. as part of an International Day of Action demanding the shut-down of the U.S. prison in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, an end to the torture inflicted there, and justice for those detained. Eighty were arrested with some taking stet agreements. Thirty-four, including Des Moines Catholic Workers Ed Bloomer and Kirk Brown, were eventually tried and found guilty on May 28, 2008. Below are two reflections by two members of the original action. For full reports and photos go to www.witnesstorture.org.



By Kirk Brown

For the purposes of this report rome was never a real place and therefore there was never any real such thing as a roman. Rather, history of human relations, corporately interpersonal and interpersonally corporate, is about the powers that influence and shape interactions, included in this equation is human power. Terms like rome, roman, america, american etc. are words that relate to combinations of power playing out in the world. And now please turn your attention to the week of May 30th, 2008, to June 6th, 2008, from there we'll move backward to January 11, 2008, and conclude with June 12, 2008, and finally perch on the "present."

On the locals and some in the group who were familiar with DC city jail the impression was formed indicating DC jail as one of the tougher jails in the country. Through recounting some of their stories I received a brief and gentle preparation for the realities that lay before. By the time sentencing came around it had become apparent that a story of my own was in the making.

Of the lowans gone to trial, Ed Bloomer was the first to receive a sentence. Then, of the lowans came Christine Gaunt. The sentence recommendation for Chris was ten days suspended jail time, a fine and a year of probation. After respectfully refusing probation and receiving a sentence of ten days in jail up front plus a fine, Christine was taken by the marshals to the holding cell on the other side of the courtroom. When my own sentencing arrived I asked for a sentence in solidarity with Chris, the judge granted my request, and I was taken by the marshals to the holding cell on the other side of the courtroom.

The jail intake process was not surprisingly prolonged and it wasn't until mid Saturday morning that I was finally in a regular cell. There were of course intake holding cells, the holding cells I was in were constantly being refilled from Friday evening until Saturday morning with about a dozen inmates clad in orange jumpsuits. There were three females and five males from the 34 convicted on Friday that were in DC jail over night, four others had been held and released.

The females were Susan Crane, Eve Tetaz and Christine Gaunt, the males were Carmen Trotta, Ed Kinane, Bill Streit, Brian

Terrell and myself. In the words of a warm welcome and a posture of openness to conversation from the guards and a lot of the other inmates, hospitality in jail was revealed in piercing contrast to the facility gray bars, facility gray walls and bright orange jumpsuits. "Good work!" said one guard, "Keep it up!" said another, "You gotta stand up for what's right!" said a third. I received some striking kindness from folks in jail.

Early in the week a new testament was given to me and from there on out my week was spent often considering what Jesus, John the Baptist and the disciples of Jesus meant by saying, "The Kingdom of heaven is near," and what they meant by the actions that followed. And since I was in a position to do a lot of thinking, I also considered some of the different takes people have had on what the lives of Jesus, John the baptist and the disciples of Jesus meant pertaining especially to their saying, "The kingdom of heaven is near." Finally, I also considered some of the formative aspects of the saying and living along with the bulk I had been mulling over.

Chronologically moving backward now, there were five from Iowa plus Chris from Cleveland that went to DC as support or to stand trial. The charge was assembling on the supreme court grounds and displaying a banner or device used to bring attention to a party, organization or movement. On January 11, 2008 the sixth anniversary of using Guantanamo Naval Base as a detention center several hundred people from all sorts of groups and states gathered at the supreme court in DC with the directive, "Close Guantanamo."

About 35 people inside the supreme court and about 35 people outside the supreme court were arrested that day. 35 people proceeded to trial. Trial began on May 27th.

Whereas a lot of the experience followed the grain of encouragement, trial was a taxing and trying experience for a lot of us defendants. Navigating through the legalese was often a nuisance to me. The legalese and the process was/is often inappropriate. I was in some ways relieved when the prosecution rested their case and we (the defense) could begin directly with our own.

One of the things that kept running into us came through utterances from the court shaped by the combination of professional-



By Renee Espeland

I was in Washington, D.C. acting in support of thirty-five people on trial. Eighty people in all were arrested on January 11, 2008, and charges ranged from "unlawful free speech" to "causing a harangue" at the Supreme Court of the United States or both. The issue of torture, a fog: searing and agonizing throughout. The torture victim often begs for the release found in death yet the object of torture is to deny both death and life. Torture rewinds any notion of gospel, of love, of civilized behavior or of law.

I began to fantasize about how I would behave or react if it were I at Guantanamo. How would I survive—what would I do? I wondered how I would behave if I were one of the guards or interrogators—who am I, what atrocities would I commit? We know from the Stanford Prison Experiment (www.prisonexp.org) that none of us are safe from corruption. (See Philip Zimbardo's new book, *The Lucifer Effect: Understanding How Good People Turn Evil*.)

Who am I, given that I claim an Easter religion and a faith based on the life and teachings of Jesus? Is it all about the blood sacrifice of Jesus the Christ to atone, fulfill, and appease? If it is, this, for me, becomes a slippery slope into inaction. The lack of credence placed on Jesus' death as an execution (for causing a harangue and unlawful speech and the like) borders on profane. The inclination of religion to frame his death as a predestined portal into the great beyond gives me more excuse than courage. Whoever said that I was here to save the world; I am not "Big D" divine am I? There will be no sacred literature written about me, I was not there "In the beginning." I am not a theology. I was arrested on Jan. 11, 2008, and yet I was afraid of the expense and time of a trial so I was not with the group on trial. I did not want to be an irresponsible mother, or a drain on the family budget, or face conflict in a marriage. I too often do not risk venturing out of my comfort zone even when that venture would not even qualify as discomfort.

A friend was telling me about her difficulty with mean-spirited and undermining behaviors at her work. She had discussed this with a wise woman in her life and had been encouraged to fast. She was ready to dismiss this advice when the women clarified

that she "fast" from the negative interactions, essentially and with indulgent abstinence, do not take it in. This gave a new approach to the problem, and it redefined what it means to fast. The definition of fasting as a deprivation from a positive thing (food) is transformed to a pro-action withstanding a negative thing (not "eating" the gossip and backstabbing)—the old warp and weft switcheroo.

The word sacrifice is a verb meaning, "to make sacred" and, "a loss entailed by giving up or selling something at less than its value." Is it time to move past the blood sacrifice offered to the pyre, alter, and hereafter and focus on actively withstanding as that which sanctifies? In other words, the notion of sacrifice as dispossession of life transforms into a proactive refusal to sell cheap. I am considering what I sell at less than its value: my soul, my integrity, my faithfulness, my courage, my humanity, my honor, my compassion, in the spirit of the Beguines—the essential Question: Why is there so much Love in me.? Too often, lukewarm, clinging to my privilege and doubt, I slump and shirk, I neither drip blood nor fast from the wanton temptation to sell cheap.

•William Earl Lynd is dead. Because of nonprofessional testimony in the trial, the jury found Earl Lynd guilty of murder and kidnapping. Kidnapping became the additional felony needed to "aggravate" the case and make it worthy of a death sentence. The prosecution presented false testimony to the jury about the kidnapping. They lied. And the fact is that lying is often part of the process. What we find is that 20 years after the crime, a fact that would have made a crucial difference in the trial is dismissed as "insignificant." No court wanted to hear about it or bother with a truthful examination of the facts. So Mr. Earl Lynd went to his death.

•Troy Davis was wrongly convicted and sentenced to death 16 years ago. The Georgia Supreme Court in April denied him a new trial. This case is not an aberration. If Troy's case had gone back to trial in Savannah, the police and Spencer Lawton, the district attorney, would have had what? What evidence would they produce to prosecute Troy Davis? Not a thing, nothing. The witnesses have recanted and told of police coercion. There is no evidence against this man, and so the Georgia Supreme Court could not allow the case to go back to

Kirk Brown on the Guantanamo Trial

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ism and the view of justice that seems to be indicative of the united states particular brand of economics (although it is not particular to the united states) like, "However I may feel personally about the issue isn't the job that I have to do. My job is to determine whether or not you broke the statute." This kind of violence fragments people by breaking up morality and work, it is grotesque.

We (the defense) also had a job to do. Recounting as much of the stories of those detained in Guantanamo as we knew, we bore witness in the court room to the lives of the men detained. We bore witness to the circumstances that have sustained practicing legalized evil on the men detained.

We hailed from afar a kingdom that makes practicing evil unnecessary and nonsensical. We bore witness of life where injustice and evil do not prop up our livelihood.

And then we were hauled off to jail.

As it is this report is meant by its shape to be an introduction to the case, for further interest, I recommend checking out the Witness Against Torture website which is www.witnesstorture.org

Not long after we were released from jail, the supreme court ruled on Boumediene v Bush. I understand their conclusion to be mixed.

On the one hand the decision to recognize and reaffirm the detainees' right of habeas corpus is a step in the right direction. On the other hand, in reading through the opinion of the court it appears as though the affirmation may be extended only to the detainees involved in the particular case. Further, it appears as though the Bush regime is going to continue to fight the decision of the court, and with the speedy dripping of molasses the government of the united states

indirectly addresses justice for some of those it holds in captivity.

As for my own person, I don't look to the January conclusion of the political hunting season with hope of redress of grievance. I do find hope in the living profession of the resurrected Christ, hailing from afar. Heaven holds this creation, and here it comes.

For a long time now humans have been placed in a position where in standing for what's right, corrupt powers collide into them. Such is the transitory and proactive helplessness of humans in history. Of course it is not always cut, clear and dry whether humans are moving into or out of corruption in every case, therefore hope that sustains life harmoniously interacts with renewal. Today has enough trouble of its own and trouble is almost a certainty, when trouble comes will your hope be sustained?

Unconventional punctuation/capitalization are intentional.

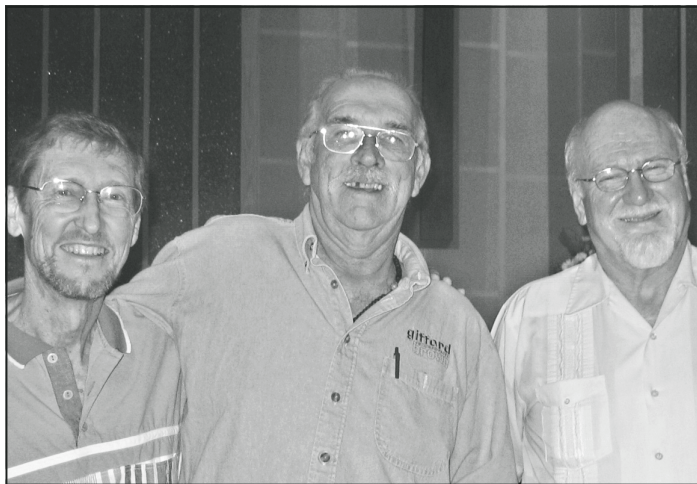
Community News

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trying to do at the Des Moines Catholic Worker and a greater love and respect for the folks who have been the leading lights in our peacemaking lives.

The newest thing in Mona's life is her granddaughter Wrigley. She is claiming bragging rights, insisting that little Wrigley

is the most beautiful baby in the world. We will concede to her judgment in this matter. Mostly though, it has been a real joy and blessing for me to be living and working with her at Berrigan House. She is uniquely suited for this life and a great comrade and peer in our shared struggle for peace and justice.



Rev. Gil Dawes, Richard Flamer, and Rev. Bob Cook were presenters at a panel on living and working with the poor in Mexico and Central America.

Renee Espeland Reflections on Guantanamo

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trial...and the reason is this: they are not about to allow this lying, racist, deadly system to be unmasked. (Murphy Davis, Hospitality vol. 27, no. 6, p.1 & 9)

•Whitney Smith is an 18-year-old new mother of a healthy baby named Mystic, born June 11th, during a time of heavy flooding experienced in Des Moines, IA. Whitney was homeless even before the flood and evacuation of Iowa Homeless Youth's Youth Outreach Center where she was getting her meals before the birth. "[Whitney] had a visit from a worker at the Iowa Department of Human Services who was conducting a Child in Need of Assistance assessment. The assessment could result in a recommendation for juvenile court intervention. There doesn't need to be an allegation of child abuse or neglect for that to take place, according to DHS spokesman Roger Munns: The decision focuses on the needs of the child, the skills of the parent, the resources available to the parent, and the parent's ability to make decisions that ensure the safety of the child" Des Moines Register 6/18/2008. A DHS worker in a case similar to this one is reported to have said that DHS should just take the child and let the parent earn it back.

•A faith-based agency has a "three strikes and you're out" policy that re-

sults in two young mothers and three very young children being asked to leave due to infractions such as "crumbs in their room." A paranoid schizophrenic and well-functioning father of four was asked to leave his family due to a non-violent, albeit slightly paranoid, argument with his wife. An advisement is given to staff to keep secret an abuse report called in by the agency that reported one of the guests so that the guest would not know who contributed to the ensuing investigation of an "unsubstantiated" incident.

What gets sold at Walmart prices when a state agency has lawful authority to remove a son or daughter because they do not believe that the parent's skills or resources or decisions are up to par due to misfortune or institutionalized poverty, rather than substantiation of abuse? Whose soul gets sold at any price when the U.S. offers a bounty and a guy turns over another guy so that he can feed his family. This was the case in Afghanistan and resulted in many men, old men and boys being sent to Guantanamo—tortured and without legal recourse. In 1987 in the McCleskey v. Kemp case, the [Supreme] court in the most bizarre decision acknowledged that racism was clearly at play in the Georgia death penalty. The justices then upheld the racist status quo. Jus-

tice William Brennan in his dissent said that the McCleskey decision was based on the court's "fear of too much justice." Is this the fear that killed Jesus's body? What is the reckoning of faith-based well-meaning folks who succumb to the seduction that says that the state/law enforcement is usually just or that the rigid tallying of rule infractions creates more order and safety than compassionate communication?

Lyndon Johnson was complaining about the CIA and remarked, "When I was growing up in Texas, we had a cow named Bessie. I'd go out early and milk her. I'd get her in the stanchion, seat myself, and squeeze out a pail of fresh milk. One day I'd worked hard and gotten a full pail of milk, but I wasn't paying attention, and old Bessie swung her shit-smeared tail through that bucket of milk. Now you know, that's what these intelligence guys do. You work hard and get a good program or policy going, and they swing a shit-smeared tail through it."

Using the CIA as a metaphor for myself, I can name a multitude of ways that I taint the milk. If Guantanamo, the death penalty and hard-edged bureaucracies are parts of what comprise "program or policy" then tainted as I am, I am obliged to swing my shit-smeared self through the programs and policies that sell cheap. By definition of "shit" and "smeared" this becomes

messy. Co-workers become annoyed with me, family members glaze over, relationships at church are strained, and I keep myself hidden. (Can church folks really think that Jews need conversion to avoid going to hell while apartheid policies in Israel are considered to be God's will?)

My bosses' responses to me are substantively like those of my senators and representatives. They label my concerns as nagging and adversarial and this tempts me to "sell cheap." It is much harder for me to persevere in these ways than it is to spend a night in jail. Michael Wynne was just fired and said "When you have a difference of philosophy with your boss, he owns the philosophy and you own the difference." If I find myself on the difference end of this transaction, then in the spirit of lemons and lemonade or a potter with clay, I must surrender and really own the difference—that being the work of stirring up and forming a Just philosophy. Nagging mercy, adversarial mercy... without dogmatism, with humility...I am short of breath.

In the Middle Eastern culture of Jesus, the breath was recognized as the ultimate power behind the cosmos. Central to the healing process, it was seen as our first and last possession—the natural rhythm of life and our link to the divine and all of creation. Liz McAlister, in a recent speech said, "We become aware of the sa-

credness of each breath, of each moment of life—we feel breath come into us as it does in the grass, trees, rocks and water. We feel the one source of this breathing. And we feel the breathing returning to all creation. Our breath feeds the plants and theirs us. The exchange unites us in God. We express gratitude for life and for each breath of life. As we inhale, we feel all newness and nourishment coming into the heart-lungs; as we exhale, we feel everything old, everything that wants to be released, leaving with the breath--renewal moment by moment; Pentecost moment by moment."

Fire (Pentecost) is a byproduct of combustion. Cellular respiration is an example of slow combustion. Many of our brothers and sisters utilize the technique of the Breath Prayer, "have mercy" is breath. The crucifixion illustrates what Jesus refused to sell choosing instead to make sacred and to live the breath named "have mercy." The breath travels all places, even on that slope where the pyre and alter slip. Resurrection is oxygen in the fire, the invite.

Liz says that prayer is a bold, even arrogant effort on our part to hold God to her promises. So I pray, "God damn it—this torture in our world! I insist! Rescue me from myself, do a quick Heimlich maneuver and breathe into me: resurrection. Spirit invoked—blow hard! blow really, really hard.

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The voice of the Des Moines Catholic Worker Community

July, 2008

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Volume 32, No. 2

Our apologies, good friends, for the fracture of good order, the burning of paper instead of children, the angering of the orderlies in the front parlor of the charnel house.

We could not, so help us God, do otherwise....

The time is past when good men can remain silent, when obedience can segregate men from public risk, when the poor can die without defense.

Daniel Berrigan
Vietnam, 1968

Iraq, 2008
Where we are
after 40 years.

<i>Prayers and Love</i>	<i>Food</i>	<i>Health and Hygiene</i>	<i>Household Supplies</i>	<i>Clothing and Bedding</i>	<i>Volunteers</i>	<i>Cash Donations</i>
<i>Without, your prayers and goodwill, nothing else matters.</i>	Cereal Coffee Fruit Vegetables Beans Meat and Fish Soups and Stews Sugar and artificial sweetener Coffee Creamer Juices Milk Cheese Butter or Margarine Eggs Salt and pepper Salad dressing and condiments	Tylenol Ibuprofen Multiple Vitamins Ointment Disinfectants Band-Aids Feminine Hygiene Items Disposable Razors Shaving Cream Shampoo and Conditioner Lotion Deodorant Toothbrushes Toothpaste Toilet Paper	Bleach Laundry Detergent Dish Soap Murphy's Oil Soap Pinesol Toilet Cleaners Paper Towels Sponges Trash bags Aluminum foil Brooms Rugs Floor mats Candles Light bulbs	Underwear T-shirts Towels Blankets Sheets Pillows Socks	Individuals and work crews for hospitality (serving food, clean-up), cleaning and general inside and outside maintenance.	Cash donations are essential to pay taxes, utilities, repair and maintenance bills and to purchase supplies.
<i>Peace and justice books and videos are always welcome donations for the Berrigan House Library.</i>	<div><div>Renovation Help</div><div>Do-it-yourselfers, carpenters, plumbers, electricians, etc. are needed to help with:</div><div><div><div><i>Dingman House</i></div><div>All new kitchen Fire Escape Basement</div><div><i>Lazarus House</i></div><div>New Roof Fire Escape</div><div><i>Ligutti House</i></div><div>Fire Escape Basement</div></div><div>Plus major foundation repair in Berrigan, Dingman, and Ligutti. With four old houses, there is always something to repair or improve. Bring your tools and pick a project.</div></div></div>					